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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the nature of journalism in high schools, characteristics of teachers and advisers, and perceived needs of journalism teachers and advisers in three states with dissimilar certification requirements: Ohio, Indiana, and Pennsylvania. A four-page questionnaire was mailed to appropriate personnel in one-third of the high schools listed in the state directory. Comparison of the three states' journalism characteristics yields an apparent correlation between certification requirements and apparent status of journalism in the schools. Indiana has the "strongest" requirements, the most qualified journalism teachers, and the largest number of high school journalism offerings. Respondents agreed that present high school journalism textbooks are inadequate and isolate students from the profession of journalism. They also agreed that the main purpose of high school journalism is to edit and publish the school newspaper, as opposed to helping students become intelligent users of mass communication media. Respondents agreed that college journalism courses were the most important background that secondary teachers could have. (JK)

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HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALISM COURSES, TEACHERS AND PERCEIVED PROFESSIONAL NEEDS IN INDIANA, OHIO AND PENNSYLVANIA

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The place of journalism in the high school curriculum and qualifications of persons who teach it or advise school publications are recurring topics. Several studies using a variety of approaches have been completed in recent years, largely on state and regional bases.

The purpose of this study was to determine the nature of journalism in high schools, characteristics of the teachers and advisers, and perceived needs of journalism teachers and advisers in three states with dissimilar certification requirements: Ohio, Indiana and Pennsylvania.

Method. Systematic samples were drawn from the directories of secondary schools in the three states. A four-page questionnaire was mailed to the newspaper adviser in each school with instructions to pass it on to the journalism teacher if he were someone else. After the original mailing, three follow-up mailings were made. The Ohio survey was completed during the 1970-71 academic year and the other two during 1971-72. Responses were received from 76.9 per cent of the Indiana sample (140 of 182), 76.7 per cent of the Ohio sample (251 of 327) and 56.4 per cent of the Pennsylvania sample (134 of 238). Each sample was composed of one-third of the high schools listed in the state directory.

I. JOURNALISM COURSES

Journalism is offered for academic credit in 80 per cent of the Indiana respondents' schools, 66 per cent of the Ohio respondents' schools and 46 per cent of the Pennsylvania respondents' schools.

The number of courses ranged from one to five, with five available in only three Indiana high schools. Indiana schools offered more semesters of journalism than Ohio or Pennsylvania schools, where journalism typically was limited to two semesters. Table I shows the distribution of courses in the three states.

TABLE I

Number of Journalism Courses Offered

	Indiana (n=140) %	Ohio (n=247) %	Pennsylvania (n=128) %
One course	25.7	35.2	26.5
Two courses	32.8	16.5	14.8
Three courses	14.2	1.6	3.1
Four courses	5.0	2.4	0.7
Five courses	2.1	0.0	0.0
None	20.0	44.1	54.6

Of the schools that offer journalism, 71.8 per cent of the Ohio and 63.3 percent of the Pennsylvania ones offer one or two semesters compared with Indiana's 45.4 per cent. In other words, 54.6 per cent of these Indiana schools offer three or more semesters of journalism.

Of all schools responding, not just those that offer journalism, the cumulative totals for Indiana increase at a greater rate than those of the other two states. Two semesters are offered by 36.4 per cent of the Indiana schools, 40.2 per cent Ohio and 29.7 per cent Pennsylvania. At four semesters, the comparative figures are Indiana 60.6 per cent, Ohio 52.7 per cent and Pennsylvania 41.4 per cent. At six semesters they are Indiana 76.3, Ohio 56.4 and Pennsylvania 46.9. Table II shows the number of semesters of journalism offered by all respondents, and Table III shows the distribution of courses among schools that offer journalism.

TABLE II

Semesters of Journalism Offered
By All Respondents in the Survey

	Indiana (n=140) Pct.	Ohio (n=247) Pct.	Pennsylvania (n=128) Pct.
One semester	15.0	10.9	14.1
Two semesters	21.4	28.3	15.6
Three semesters	7.1	1.2	0.8
Four semesters	17.1	11.3	10.9
Five semesters	5.0	0.4	0.8
Six semesters	10.7	3.2	4.7
Seven or more semesters	3.5	0.4	0.8
None	20.0	44.1	54.6

TABLE III

Semesters of Journalism Offered in Schools
That Teach Journalism

	Indiana (n=112) Pct.	Ohio (n=135) Pct.	Pennsylvania (n=60) Pct.
One semester	18.7	20.0	30.0
Two semesters	26.7	51.8	33.3
Three semesters	8.9	2.2	1.6
Four semesters	21.4	20.7	23.3
Five semesters	6.2	0.7	1.6
Six semesters	13.4	5.9	10.0
Seven or more semesters	4.4	0.7	1.6

Most schools offering one or two semesters restricted entrollment to juniors and seniors, and nearly all offering more than two semesters limited enrollment to students of the "appropriate grade level."

Textbooks. There was a consensus among respondents that present high school journalism textbooks are inadequate and isolate students from the profession of journalism. Many respondents mentioned that texts need more professional treatment of journalism as a field of study and fewer examples of worthless situations. Dissatisfaction also strongly focused on the dated and limited selections.

We did not probe their familiarity with texts, though, and wonder whether respondents had an adequate base upon which to make their comments. Campbell found in a 1969 study that had a response rate of 12.5 per cent from schools with known journalism programs that more than half the respondents were not familiar with four of the most recent texts in a list he gave them. The best-known books were the ones that had been in print longest, although they had been revised.[1]

Purpose. Most respondents agreed that the main purpose of high school journalism is to edit and publish the school newspaper. This contrasts with statements about helping students become intelligent users of mass communication media as being the primary purpose of journalism courses from such leaders as Gretchen Kemp (1957),[2] Indiana Committee on Journalism (1965)[3] and the survey of the AEJ Secondary School Division (1971).[4] Teaching fact-gathering techniques and teaching factual or narrative writing were rated second and third with helping make students intelligent consumers of the mass media ranking fourth. Table IV shows how respondents reacted to the questionnaire's statements about possible primary and secondary purposes of high school journalism.

TABLE IV

Principal Purposes of Journalism
in Respondents' Schools

	Indiana				Ohio				Pennsylvania			
	Pri	Sec	NA		Pri	Sec	NA		Pri	Sec	NA	
Edit and Publish the school newspaper	79.2	13.6	7.2	(n=125)	82.4	12.5	5.1	(n=176)	80.6	11.8	7.5	(n=93)
Teach fact-gathering techniques	52.1	41.3	6.6	(n=121)	48.8	38.6	12.7	(n=166)	55.8	39.5	4.7	(n=86)
Teach factual or narrative writing	46.7	44.2	9.2	(n=120)	45.6	35.8	18.8	(n=165)	47.7	40.7	11.6	(n=86)
Help make students intelligent consumers of the mass media	45.8	40.8	13.3	(n=120)	36.4	37.7	25.9	(n=162)	38.9	37.8	23.3	(n=90)
Edit and publish the school yrbook	43.6	22.6	33.9	(n=124)	36.7	13.0	50.3	(n=169)	36.3	15.0	48.8	(n=80)
Develop the writing ability of good students of English	40.2	47.9	12.0	(n=117)	35.9	39.5	23.6	(n=167)	41.6	44.9	13.5	(n=89)
Write news stories about the high school and its students for the local mass media	33.3	50.8	15.8	(n=120)	36.6	36.8	26.5	(n=166)	33.0	39.8	27.3	(n=88)
Teach professional journalism in case students enter it later	17.4	71.1	11.6	(n=121)	16.3	53.0	30.7	(n=166)	19.3	58.0	22.7	(n=88)
Reward good students of English with something challenging to take	15.3	48.7	36.1	(n=119)	16.3	29.5	54.2	(n=166)	21.8	29.9	48.3	(n=87)
Edit & publish the school magazine	8.5	13.6	78.0	(n=118)	5.8	8.4	85.8	(n=155)	13.9	13.9	72.2	(n=79)
Give good students of English something easy to take	4.3	9.5	86.2	(n=116)	3.7	7.4	88.9	(n=162)	1.2	9.9	88.9	(n=81)
Give poor students of English something easy to take	2.5	10.2	87.3	(n=118)	6.7	11.5	81.8	(n=166)	.0	5.9	94.1	(n=85)

Pri = Primary Purpose Sec = Secondary Purpose NA = Not Applicable

Qualifications. About 80 per cent of the respondents believe that journalism should be open to all students of the appropriate grade level. No other suggested qualification received more than 39 per cent agreement, and that was for a requirement that students be selected by the journalism teacher or other professional person. Table V shows respondents' required qualifications of students.

Typing, which rated sixth out of eight suggested requirements, was first in the AEJ Secondary School Division survey last year. That group also agreed that journalism be made available to all students of the appropriate grade level.

II. THE TEACHERS AND ADVISERS

Academic background. Nearly 47 per cent of 138 Indiana respondents had nine or more semester hours of college journalism, but only 20.2 per cent of 237 Ohio respondents and 9.4 per cent of 115 Pennsylvania respondents had that much. Indiana also led the other two states with 26.8 per cent of its respondents having college journalism majors.

At the other end, though, 25.2 per cent of the Indiana respondents never had a college journalism course, compared with 49.6 per cent of those in Pennsylvania and 61.6 per cent in Ohio. Table VI shows the college journalism background of the respondents in terms of credit hours.

Although the samples may have slightly different bases, the Indiana figures suggest that the percentage of journalism teachers and advisers in that state without college journalism courses has declined significantly from 50 per cent in John A. Boyd's 1960 study to 25.2 per cent in 1971.[5]

One factor in the difference in backgrounds among the three states, of course, is certification requirements. For about ten years, Indiana

TABLE V

Qualifications Required of a Student to Enroll in Journalism

	Indiana			Ohio			Pennsylvania		
	Yes	No		Yes	No		Yes	No	
Open to all students of appropriate grade level.....	79.6	20.4	(n=103)	83.6	15.4	(n=140)	87.0	13.0	(n=77)
Must be selected by a journalism teacher or other professional.....	34.0	66.0	(n=103)	38.6	61.4	(n=127)	36.0	64.0	(n-75)
Must have at least a C average overall.....	34.4	65.6	(n=90)	31.9	68.1	(n=116)	20.6	79.4	(n=63)
Must have a B average in English and a C average overall.....	28.4	71.6	(n=95)	30.3	69.8	(n=119)	33.3	66.7	(n=75)
Must have at least a B average in English.....	25.0	75.0	(n=96)	27.4	72.6	(n=113)	36.5	63.5	(n=74)
Must be able to type.....	13.5	86.5	(n=96)	19.8	80.2	(n=121)	4.1	95.9	(n=73)
Must have at least a B average overall.....	4.6	95.4	(n=87)	9.2	90.8	(n=109)	10.6	89.4	(n=66)
Restricted mainly to vocational and/or special education students.	.0	100.0	(n=89)	5.2	94.8	(n=116)	5.8	94.2	(n=69)

TABLE VI

Numbers of College Journalism Hours Taken

	Indiana (n=138) Pct.	Ohio (n=237) Pct.	Pennsylvania (n=115) Pct.
More than 35 semester hours...	18.2	4.2	0.8
20 to 35 semester hours.....	18.8	9.7	2.6
9 to 19 semester hours.....	9.8	6.3	6.0
1 to 8 semester hours.....	27.5	18.1	40.8
None.....	25.2	61.6	49.6

has required a journalism minor of 24 semester hours or a journalism major of 40 semester hours for certification. Also, all English majors must complete one journalistic writing course as part of English certification. Last year in Ohio, a person needed 15 semester hours of journalism for certification[6] and Pennsylvania teachers were not certificated for journalism.

Media experience. More than 80 per cent of the respondents reported no professional media experience, but about 60 per cent had worked on high school or college publications.

Indiana respondents had more professional media experience than those in Ohio and Pennsylvania. About 23 per cent of the Indiana respondents reported both professional media and college publications experience, and another 45 per cent had college, high school or other related media experience. Related experience included being editor of a high school or school board newsletter and preparing publicity releases for a branch of the armed services.

Fifteen per cent of the Ohio respondents and 14 per cent of the Pennsylvania respondents reported professional media experience, with another 33 per cent Ohio and 39 per cent Pennsylvania reporting high school, college or related media experience.

Most of the professional experience was on newspapers as reporters, copy editors or editors. Only four teachers had broadcasting experience, and two, technical writing and editing experience.

Table VII shows experience reported by respondents. Nearly all reporting two or more had both professional media and high school or college media experience.

TABLE VII

Journalistic Experience of High School Journalism Teachers and Advisers in Ohio, Indiana and Pennsylvania

	Indiana (n=138) Pct.	Ohio (n=237) Pct.	Pennsylvania (n=115) Pct.
College Newspaper.....	21.0	7.9	13.8
College Yearbook.....	0.0	2.1	1.7
College Magazine.....	0.0	1.2	1.7
High School Publications.....	9.4	2.2	0.0
Professional Newspaper.....	6.5	2.1	9.5
Professional Radio-TV.....	0.0	1.2	0.0
Other.....	2.9	2.5	2.6
Two or more.....	28.2	19.4	26.0
None.....	31.9	51.0	35.6

Other characteristics. About half the respondents were in their first five years of advising: Ohio, 50 per cent; Indiana, 59 per cent; Pennsylvania, 53 per cent. This is strikingly consistent with Boyd's 1960 finding in Indiana that "more than 50 per cent were in their first five years as advisers."[7]

This relatively high turnover rate is encouraging in that adequately prepared journalism teachers and advisers apparently could readily enter the field in the school systems in the three states.

At least 60 per cent of all respondents had taken one or more college journalism courses, and more than half had undergraduate English majors. About 60 per cent had a master's degree, typically in English.

Extra compensation, usually as salary rather than reduced teaching load, was paid to about 60 per cent of the Pennsylvania advisers, 55 per cent of the Ohio ones, and 75 per cent of the Indiana advisers.

III. RECOMMENDED BACKGROUND TO TEACH JOURNALISM

Credit hours. More than one-fourth believed that a secondary school journalism teacher should have a minimum of a college journalism minor, but more than that felt they had no basis for making a recommendation. In both Pennsylvania and Ohio, 35 per cent said they had no basis for judging the number of journalism hours needed, and in Indiana the figure was 20 per cent. Four per cent felt a person could teach high school journalism without any course work in college journalism. Almost all of these had taken no college journalism courses. Nearly all respondents with an English major who answered this question indicated that nine semester hours of journalism are adequate background for teaching secondary school journalism. (see Table VIII)

Second field. Respondents believe a journalism teacher should have a second teaching field, such as English (42.5 per cent), radio-television (18.8 per cent), business (16.1 per cent) or speech (14.4 per cent). Teachers with backgrounds in English recommended competence in English plus knowledge of the business field.

TABLE VIII

Minimum Number of Journalism Credit Hours that Should be Required to be Eligible to Teach High School Journalism

	Indiana (n=135)	Ohio (n=200)	Pennsylvania (n=107)
36 Semester Hours.....	4.4	4.5	3.7
20 Semester Hours.....	31.9	21.0	17.8
9 Semester Hours.....	31.9	24.5	32.7
1 to 8 Semester Hours.....	9.6	9.0	7.5
None.....	3.0	5.5	2.8
No Basis for Judging.....	19.3	35.5	35.5

Respondents in the three states showed high agreement on college journalism courses most essential for secondary school journalism teachers. They were asked to rate each of 18 suggested courses between 7, highly essential, and 1, highly unessential. Based on overall means, the highest rated courses are (1) newswriting, (2) editorial writing, (3) newspaper makeup, (4) feature writing, (5) copy editing, (6) advising student publications and (7) production techniques. Mass communication and society came in eighth, behind seven predominantly skill and technique courses. Journalism research techniques rated 16th and journalism history dead last, the only course rated below the 4.0 neutral midpoint. Table IX shows the responses by state.

The list offered respondents was skewed toward practical courses, and results may have been slightly different if more theory and process courses had been listed. With the overwhelming majority concentrating on getting out the school newspaper, though, emphasis on practical courses is expected.

In the AEJ Secondary School Division survey last year, mass communication and society tied for third, journalism law tied for seventh, journalism history tied at 11th and journalism research techniques came in last at 2.80.[8]

TABLE IX

Mean Scores and Ranks of College Journalism Courses
Recommended for High School Journalism Teachers

(Courses were rated from 7, highly essential, to 1, highly unessential)

	Pennsylvania			Indiana			Ohio		
	Mean	Rank		Mean	Rank		Mean	Rank	
News Writing.....	6.03	1	(n=105)	5.95	1	(n=130)	6.22	1	(n=185)
Editorial Writing.....	5.92	2	(n=106)	5.53	6	(n=130)	6.03	2	(n=185)
Newspaper Makeup.....	5.87	3	(n=104)	5.72	4	(n=130)	5.95	4	(n=183)
Feature Writing.....	5.63	5	(n=106)	5.63	5	(n=128)	5.99	3	(n=184)
Copy Editing.....	5.64	4	(n=105)	5.73	3	(n=128)	5.82	5	(n=184)
Advising Student Publications.....	5.24	7	(n=103)	5.83	2	(n=130)	5.63	6	(n=181)
Production Techniques.....	5.26	6	(n=104)	5.41	7	(n=128)	5.45	8	(n=181)
Mass Communication and Society.....	5.24	8	(n=101	4.83	12	(n=121)	5.46	7	(n=177)
Photography.....	4.87	9	(n=105)	5.27	8	(n=130)	4.93	10	(n=184)
Principles of Public Relations...	4.83	10	(n=104)	4.50	14	(n=127)	5.02	9	(n=181)
School Yearbook Procedures.....	4.38	14	(n=99)	5.20	9	(n=127)	4.92	11	(n=176)
Advertising Layout....	4.62	11	(n=104)	4.95	10	(n=128)	4.66	12	(n=183)
Typography and Graphics.....	4.55	12	(n=104)	4.88	11	(n=125)	4.60	13	(n=183)
Principles of Advertising.....	4.31	16	(n=104)	4.59	13	(n=128)	4.55	14	(n=181)
Journalism Law.....	4.44	13	(n=106)	4.41	15	(n=127)	4.32	16	(n=181)
Journalism Research...	4.32	15	(n=103)	3.73	17	(n=127)	4.39	15	(n=181)
Radio-TV News Writing.	4.21	17	(n=103)	3.98	16	(n=123)	4.10	17	(n=181)
Journalism History....	3.26	18	(n=105)	3.63	18	(n=127)	3.38	18	(n=184)

Another measure of agreement among the respondents for the three states was indicated by high rank-order correlations. Rank-order correlations were obtained for the courses by first ranking each course for each state according to the mean value per course and then correlating the ranks between states. These correlations ranged from a .96 between Indiana and Pennsylvania respondents to a .84 between Pennsylvania and Ohio respondents. A correlation of .88 existed between the Indiana and Ohio teachers.

A further analysis of the courses between the 1971 AEJ Secondary School Division survey and each of the three states showed lower agreement on the courses. These correlations ranged from a high of .77 between the Pennsylvania and the secondary school respondents to a .63 between the Ohio and the secondary school respondents. Between the Indiana and the AEJ respondents there was a correlation of .70.

TABLE X

Rank Correlations of Courses by High School Journalism Teachers in Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and AEJ Secondary School Division Members

Groups			
Indiana High School Teachers.....	-		
Ohio High School Teachers.....	.88	.84	
Pennsylvania High School Teachers..	.96	.84	-
AEJ Secondary School Division Members.....	.70	.63	.77

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Comparison of the three states' secondary school journalism characteristics yields an correlation between certification requirements and apparent status of journalism in the schools. Indiana has the "strongest" requirements, the most qualified journalism teachers and the largest number of high school journalism offerings.

It seems unusual that more teachers in Pennsylvania, which has no journalism certification, have taken college journalism courses than those in Ohio, which does have certification. Also, more Pennsylvania teachers report journalism and other media experience than Ohio teachers. However, more Ohio teachers had journalism majors or minors than Pennsylvania teachers. Most of the Pennsylvania teachers who had taken journalism had taken fewer than eight semester hours.

There still appears to be a gap between what leaders, curriculum planners and others see as the primary purpose of scholastic journalism and what the high school teachers see. Boyd concluded in 1960 that "more time in the beginning journalism course was spent on theory than on producing publications"[9] (italics added), but the teachers in all three states said the primary purpose is to publish the school newspaper.

Teachers in Ohio and Pennsylvania recommended that prospective journalism teachers take more hours in journalism than they themselves had taken. In Indiana, though, this wasn't the case. More than 18 per cent of the Indiana respondents had taken 36 or more sememster hours of journalism, but only 4.4 per cent recommended this much as the minimum needed to teach journalism. The recommended amount of journalism clustered around two options, 20 semester hours and 9 semester hours. Last year's survey of journalism professors indicated most support for 20 semester hours or a journalism minor, which is about the same (47.4 per cent between the two).[10]

This type of study leads to more questions than answers. Now that we have an idea of what journalism is like in the three states' high schools, we still need to explore how journalism can and should fit into the curriculum. Should it be integrated with English or social studies? Should it be part of a required course or an entire required course? What kind of journalism instruction is relevant for the coming decade, and is there any hope of implementing it in the high school curriculum? Is there any incentive at all for persons to become high school journalism teachers?

Several writers have indicated that the high school curriculum must and will undergo drastic revision.[11] Beyond finding out what high school journalism is like today, leaders and others interested in it should work to conceptualize and implement the secondary school journalism or mass communication study appropriate for the 1980s.

NOTES

1. Campbell, Laurence R. "Journalism in Middle West High Schools in 1969." Iowa City: Quill and Scroll, [1969].

2. Griggs, Ruth Marie, Jane Hall Pa Gable and Kathleen Dyer Keilman, committee. Course of Study and Handbook for High School Journalism. Franklin, Ind.: Indiana High School Press Association, 1957.

3. The Indiana Committee on Journalism. Teacher's Guide to High School Journalism. Indianapolis: Indiana State Department of Public Instruction in cooperation with The Newspaper Fund of The Wall Street Journal, 1965.

4. Click, J. W., and John W. Windhauser, "Suggested High School Journalism Courses and Teacher Certification Requirements." Paper read before the Association for Education in Journalism Secondary School Division, Columbia, South Carolina, August 1971.

5. Boyd, John A. High School Newspaper Advisers in Indiana and Their Instructional Programs in Journalism. (Ed.D. Dissertation) Bloomington: Indiana University, 1960.

6. Beginning this year, Ohio has a program that combines English, speech and journalism and provides journalism certification for only 9 semester hours. Journalism certification as a separate teaching subject requires 20 semester hours.

7. Boyd, John A., "High School Journalism Instruction in Indiana," Journalism Quarterly, 37 (Autumn 1960), p. 587.

8. Click and Windhauser, op. cit., Table 4.

9. Boyd, "High School Journalism Instruction in Indiana," loc. cit.

10. Click and Windhauser, op. cit., Table 3.

11. See especially Eurich, Alvin (ed.). High School 1980. New York: Pitman, 1970, and Neil Postman's chapter on "The Reformed High School English Curriculum."